

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously presented) A medical device, comprising  
  
a hollow housing;  
  
a needle having a sharpened tip operable between an extended position extending forwardly from the housing and a retracted position in which the sharpened tip of the needle is enclosed within the housing;  
  
a catheter mounted on the needle, wherein the catheter comprises a catheter hub;  
  
a biasing element biasing the needle toward the retracted position; and  
  
a needle retainer fixedly connected with the needle and releasably retaining the needle in the extended position, comprising a radially deflecting elongated arm which directly engages the catheter hub;  
  
wherein the needle retainer releases the needle upon disengagement of the catheter hub from the elongated arm allowing the elongated arm to deflect inwardly towards the inside of the housing and allowing the biasing element to propel the needle rearward; and  
  
wherein when the needle is in the retracted position, the needle retainer is retracted inside the housing.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Original) The medical device of claim 1 wherein the elongated arm comprises a latch releasably engaging the housing.

4. (Original) The medical device of claim 1 comprising a flashback chamber integrally formed with the needle retainer.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently amended) A medical device comprising:

a hollow housing;

a needle having a sharpened tip operable between an extended position extending forwardly from the housing and a retracted position in which the sharpened tip is enclosed within the housing;

a catheter mounted on the needle;

a biasing element biasing the needle rearwardly into the retracted position;

a needle retainer operable between a latched position and an unlatched position,

wherein in the latched position the needle retainer retains the needle in the extended position against the bias of the biasing element, and

wherein the needle retainer comprises a radially deflecting elongated arm which directly engages the catheter hub and deflects inwardly toward the inside of the housing to automatically release the needle upon disengagement of the catheter from the housing; and

an exposed surface manually operable to move the needle retainer radially inwardly into contact with a wall of the housing to thereby delay retraction of an inserted needle ~~by retaining the needle retainer in the latched position.~~

7. (Original) The medical device of claim 6 wherein the catheter has an internal surface and an external surface, and a forward portion of the needle retainer engages the catheter external surface.

8. (Original) The medical device of claim 6 comprising a fluid chamber in fluid communication with the needle.

9. (Original) The medical device of claim 6 wherein the needle retainer is releasably connected to the housing.

10. (Original) The medical device of claim 6 wherein a rearward portion of the needle retainer is spaced rearwardly from the catheter.

11-13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently amended) A method for inserting an IV catheter, comprising the steps of:

providing a catheter insertion device having a housing, a catheter hub removably mounted on the housing, a needle, and a needle retainer for releasably retaining the needle so that the needle projects forwardly from the housing, wherein the needle retainer comprises a radially deflecting elongated arm which directly engages the catheter hub;

disengaging the catheter from the housing, wherein the disengagement of the catheter causes the elongated arm of the needle retainer to deflect inwardly toward the inside of the housing thereby causing the needle to begin retracting into the housing;

selectively manually ~~engaging~~ moving the needle retainer radially inwardly into contact with a wall of the housing to thereby impede retraction of the needle;

~~deflecting the needle retainer inwardly to release~~ releasing the selective manual engagement of the needle retainer and the needle; and

~~retracting~~ deflecting the needle retainer inwardly to retract the needle into the housing.

15-21. (Cancelled)